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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/823,217	04/13/2004	Ulrich Demuth	21334-1316	4658

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EXAMINER

LEON, EDWIN A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2833

DATE MAILED: 04/20/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/823,217

Applicant(s)

DEMUTH, ULRICH

Examiner

Edwin A. León

Art Unit

2833

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 and 19-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 17 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 4/13/04 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1-16 and 19-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Martin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,558,176). With regard to Claim 1, Martin et al. discloses an electrical connector arrangement, comprising: a first connector (18) arranged in a housing (146); and an actuation lever (14) arranged on the first connector, configured to engage a mating connector (22), and movable between a free position (Fig. 6) in which the first connector and the mating connector are unmated and a coupled position (Fig. 8) in which the two connectors are fully mated; a portion of the actuation lever being disposed between the first connector and the housing, and having thereon a clamping projection (132) which, in the coupled position, is in engagement with a mating clamping projection (170) on the housing. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 2, Martin et al. discloses the actuation lever is pivotal relative to the first connector. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 3, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projection protrudes towards the housing. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 4, Martin et al. discloses the mating clamping projection is formed on the housing and protrudes toward the lever. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 5, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projection on the lever is resilient in the direction of the housing and is deflected toward the housing by movement of the actuation lever from the free position into the coupled position. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 6, Martin et al. discloses the resilient clamping projection is formed by a resilient portion (130) of the actuation lever. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 7, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projection on the lever is formed on a resilient portion (130) of the actuation lever. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 8, Martin et al. discloses the resilient portion of the actuation lever is formed by a spring tab (138) cut to protrude out of the lever. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 9, Martin et al. discloses the spring tab includes a clamping projection (tip of 132) pointing towards the housing. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 10, Martin et al. discloses the first connector includes a ramp projection (178) that urges the resilient lever region toward the mating clamping projection during the movement of the actuation lever from the free position into the coupled position, such that the clamping projection engages the mating clamping projection. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 11, Martin et al. discloses the first connector is a socket connector (22). See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 12, Martin et al. discloses the first connector is a plug connector (22). See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 13, Martin et al. discloses the actuation lever has on each side of the first connector a respective lever part (26) having a respective clamping projection, and the housing has at corresponding locations on two mutually opposing inner wall regions (interior walls opposite to 150) a respective mating clamping projection. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 14, Martin et al. discloses the first connector has a mating clamping projection (170) on each of two diametrically opposing sides thereof, the actuation lever is constructed as a two-armed lever having a respective lever arm (26) on each of the two diametrically opposing sides of the first connector, and the lever arms each having a clamping projection (132) positioned to engage the respective mating clamping projection. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 15, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projections of each lever arm comprise a deflectable spring tab (138) cut to protrude from the lever arm with a clamping projection (tip of 132) on the spring tab. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 16, Martin et al. discloses the actuation lever is constructed to be approximately U-shaped and has two limbs (26) of this U-shape which each form one of the two lever arms, each of the limbs connected to a handle portion (110) and terminating in a free end (114). See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 19, Martin et al. discloses an actuation lever (14) constructed to be mounted on a connector (18) arranged in a housing (146), the actuation lever being movable between a free position (Fig. 6) and a coupled position (Fig. 8) to move the connector into and out of an electrical connection with a mating connector (22), the actuation lever having a clamping projection (132) disposed to be positioned between the connector and the housing and configured to engage a mating clamping projection (170) on the housing opposite the clamping projection when the actuation lever is in the coupled position. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 20, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projection on the lever is formed by a portion (126) of the lever region which protrudes towards the surrounding housing when the actuation lever is arranged on the connector. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 21, Martin et al. discloses the clamping projection on the lever is formed on a lever portion (126) which is resilient in the direction of the housing when the actuation lever is arranged on the connector. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 22, Martin et al. discloses the resilient lever portion is formed by a spring tab (138) cut to protrude out of the lever. See Figs. 1-11.

With regard to Claim 23, Martin et al. discloses a clamping projection (tip of 132) extending toward the housing provided on the spring tab. See Figs. 1-11.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 17-18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The references fail to teach, disclose, or suggest, either alone or in combination, regarding Claim 17, each of the two limbs of the U-shaped actuation lever has an opening at the free end for receiving a pivot peg arranged on the first connector and regarding Claim 18, each of the two limbs of the U-shaped actuation lever has at least one tooth at its free end constructed to mesh with at least one correspondingly positioned mating tooth on the mating connector to bring about a relative movement between the first connector and the mating connector and in combination with the rest of the limitations of the base and intermediate claims.

Conclusion

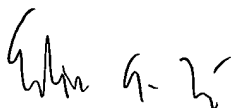
4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Okabe (U.S. Patent No. 6,332,789), Matsushita (U.S. Patent No. 6,783,388), Sharples et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,824,406), and Saka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,461,177) disclose connectors having actuation levers with projections and housings with mating projections.

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5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Edwin A. León whose telephone number is (571) 272-2008. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 10:00-6:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on 571-272-2800, extension 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Edwin A. Leon
AU 2833



TRUCT. NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EAL
April 15, 2005